

# NPL Site Narrative for Big John Salvage - Hoult Road

## BIG JOHN SALVAGE - HOULT ROAD Fairmont, West Virginia

Federal Register Notice: [July 27, 2000](#)

**Conditions at Proposal (February 4, 2000):** The approximately 20-acre Big John Salvage Hoult Road site is located in Marion County, a predominantly rural county of northcentral West Virginia. The site is situated in a mixed industrial/residential area of Fairmont, West Virginia. The site lies along the eastern edge of WV Route 15 (Hoult Road), approximately 1,320 feet east of the Monongahela River. The site is bordered on the north, south and east by wooded terrain. The Sharon Steel (Fairmont Coke) Superfund site is located on the southeastern side of the site. The Monongahela River lies to the west of the site. An unnamed tributary of the Monongahela River flows along the southern border of the site and drains into the Monongahela River.

The site was originally owned and operated by the Reilly Tar and Chemical Corporation (RTCC) from 1932 until 1973. Approximately 12,000 gallons of crude tar waste from the nearby Domestic Coke Corporation and Dupont Coke plant were processed at the site daily from 1932 until 1957. The RTCC was investigated as the possible source of tar and phenol in 1940 and 1944 by the West Virginia Department of Health (WVDH). The RTCC was also investigated by the WV Department of Natural Resources (WVDNR) in 1971 as a

possible source of phenol in the Monongahela River. As a result of these investigations, phenol was detected in the unnamed tributary and the Monongahela River at elevated levels. In January 1973, the RTCC sold its property on Hoult Road to Big John Salvage.

In December 1982, EPA learned that wastes were being received at the Big John Salvage-Hoult Road site from the nearby Westinghouse Electric Corporation (WEC) facility. These wastes included oils that contained elevated levels of mercury. In July 1983, EPA collected tar, surface water, sediment, and biological samples from the site. Polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) were detected in on-site soils and in sediment at the confluence of the unnamed tributary of the Monongahela River and the Monongahela River. Samples collected from on-site cullet piles contained elevated levels of lead and mercury.

In January 1984, EPA entered into a consent order with the owner of Big John Salvage, Inc. requiring removal of all drums and cullet piles, and draining the on-site oil separator; all work was to be completed by June 1984. As of June 11, 1984, no work had been completed. In July 1984, upon receipt of funding approval, EPA issued oral demands to the owners of Big John Salvage and RTCC to clean up the site. Big John Salvage agreed to address the cullet piles and RTCC agreed to initiate clean up activities under the direction of EPA. A consent order was executed with RTCC requiring the removal of all on-site coal tar related wastes. Satisfactory cleanup operations occurred from October 1984 through April 16, 1985.

In the fall of 1992, the EPA Region III Superfund Removal Branch conducted a cleanup at the Big John Salvage property that focused on the removal of drums containing hazardous materials. Approximately 60 drums containing flammable and corrosive liquids were removed. In 1997, the land was purchased by Steel Fabricators Inc. apparently for timber operations.

In March 1998, the West Virginia Division of Environmental Protection (WVDEP) discovered that a previously empty 20,000-

gallon vertical tank had been removed from the Big John Salvage yard and transported to the adjacent Sharon Steel property. The tank was later found to contain used oil or coal tar oil. WVDEP also observed two large excavation pits on the Big John property. Sampling confirmed the presence of oil, antifreeze, and diesel fuel in these pits. WVDEP also collected soil samples from a glass cullet pile and confirmed the presence of lead in the soil adjacent to the cullet pile. In December 1998, EPA completed a removal action at the site in which the oil pits and surrounding contaminated soil were removed.

During a March 1999 Site Inspection (SI) environmental media samples were collected to assess the environmental impact the site had on the Monongahela River, which is used as a public fishery. Sampling results show that the surface water of the Monongahela River and its unnamed tributary are being contaminated with elevated levels of metals and various PAHs. At other sampling locations within the unnamed tributary areas, PAHs and metals were found at elevated concentrations. Benzo(a)pyrene is of special concern because this hazardous substance tends to bioaccumulate within human food chain organisms.

**Status (July 2000):** EPA is considering various alternatives for this site.

*[The description of the site (release) is based on information available at the time the site was evaluated with the HRS. The description may change as additional information is gathered on the sources and extent of contamination. See [56 FR 5600](#), February 11, 1991, or subsequent FR notices.]*

For more information about the hazardous substances identified in this narrative summary, including general information regarding the effects of exposure to these substances on human health, please see the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) ToxFAQs. ATSDR ToxFAQs can be found on the Internet at <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaq.html> or by telephone at 1-888-42-ATSDR or 1-888-422-8737.